

DETERMINANTS OF CONDOM-USE BEHAVIOR FROM STUDIES USING THE HEALTH BELIEF MODEL (A Literature Review)

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ABSTRACT

This is a review of publications addressing aspects of the Health Belief Model (HBM) in predicting condom-use behavior. Five articles were identified as the most relevant and are included in the bibliography based on the coverage of variables of theory that were studied in the articles. There are various results from five articles that discussed the Health Belief Model. According to the review, the variable that best predicts condom use behavior is the perceived barrier. There are also some recommendations to be considered for future study of HBM theories. The HBM needs to have greater applicability to a range of social classes. In many cultures traditional gender roles consider it inappropriate for women to discuss sex, suggestion to use condoms may imply infidelity and unequal power in sexual relationships may hinder women's ability to protect themselves or at least hinder discussing past risk behaviors of their male partners. More work is also needed to specify and measure factors which should be added to the HBM, thereby increasing the model's predictive power. Theorists need to be as precise as possible in specifying the causal relations among the components in their models. Theorists need to be more willing to address the limitations of their models. Future studies in condom use behavior should incorporate the factor of partner type, or establish it as a separate and distinct variable. Old measures of health concepts need to be replaced with new measures.

INTRODUCTION

This is a review of publications addressing aspects of the Health Belief Model in predicting condom-use behavior. A large body of literature exists on the positive impacts of condom-use as a protective tool against HIV/AIDS. Some of the well known theories to predict condom use behavior is the Health Belief Model. Much has been written on the effectiveness of both theories in predicting condom use behavior in order to minimize the risk of infection by HIV/AIDS.

Initially, this review was concerned with bringing together literature on the Health Belief Model in predicting HIV/AIDS preventive behavior in general. However, so many articles were found that the review was narrowed down according to a specific behavior, which is condom-use behavior. Key studies and academic articles that have examined both theories on predicting condom-use behavior are organized by the year

of publication with the aim of stating clearly what is known and not known about the variables influencing condom use behavior by HBM. Thus, this literature review aims to highlight recent findings on the Health Belief Model in predicting condom-use behavior; it is intended as a resource for all who are engaged in researching, designing, implementing or evaluating HIV/AIDS prevention programs.

BACKGROUND

Worldwide, at least 33 million people are living with HIV/AIDS, and another 14 million have died. An estimated 16,000 new infections occur every day. About 6 of every 10 new HIV infections are to women, and many newborns contract the virus from infected mothers. Worldwide the number of men, women and children living with HIV or AIDS is estimated to be 42 million and the number continues to rise (UNAIDS, July 2002). With the current rate of over 16,000 new infections per day, there